

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5485

FISCAL
NOTE

By Delegates Lewis, Hamilton, Garcia, Hansen, and

Hornbuckle

[Introduced February 13, 2026; referred to the

Committee on Energy and Public Works]

1 A BILL to amend §21-5C-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to increasing
2 the state minimum wage.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

**ARTICLE 5C. MINIMUM WAGE AND MAXIMUM HOURS STANDARDS FOR
EMPLOYEES.**

§21-5C-2. Minimum wages.

1 (a) *Minimum wage:*

2 (1) After June 30, 2006, every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees wages at
3 a rate not less than \$5.85 per hour.

4 (2) After June 30, 2007, every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees wages at
5 a rate not less than \$6.55 per hour.

6 (3) After June 30, 2008, every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees wages at
7 a rate not less than \$7.25 per hour.

8 (4) After December 31, 2014, every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees
9 wages at a rate not less than \$8.00 per hour.

10 (5) After December 31, 2015, every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees
11 wages at a rate not less than \$8.75 per hour.

12 (6) After December 31, 2026, every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees
13 wages at a rate not less than \$11.00 per hour.

14 ~~(6)~~ (7) When the federal minimum hourly wage as prescribed by 29 U.S.C. §206 (a) (1) is
15 equal to or greater than the wage rate prescribed in the applicable provision of this subsection,
16 every employer shall pay to each of his or her employees wages at a rate of not less than the
17 federal minimum hourly wage as prescribed by 29 U.S.C. §206 (a) (1). The minimum wage rates
18 required under this subsection shall be thereafter adjusted in accordance with adjustments made
19 in the federal minimum hourly rate. The adoption of the federal minimum wage provided by this

20 subsection includes only the federal minimum hourly rate prescribed in 29 U.S.C. §206 (a) (1) and
21 does not include other wage rates, or conditions, exclusions, or exceptions to the federal minimum
22 hourly wage rate. In addition, adoption of the federal minimum hourly wage rate does not extend or
23 modify the scope or coverage of the minimum wage rate required under this subsection.

24 (b) *Training wage:*

25 (1) Notwithstanding the provisions set forth in subsection (a) of this section to the contrary,
26 an employer may pay an employee first hired after June 30, 2006, a subminimum training wage
27 not less than \$5.15 per hour: *Provided*, That an employer may pay an employee first hired after
28 December 31, 2014, a subminimum training wage not less than \$6.40 per hour.

29 (2) An employer may not pay the subminimum training wage set forth in subdivision (1) of
30 this subsection to any individual:

31 (A) Who has attained or attains while an employee of the employer, the age of twenty
32 years; or

33 (B) For a cumulative period of not more than ninety days per employee: *Provided*, That if
34 any business has not been in operation for more than ninety days at the time the employer hired
35 the employee, the employer may pay the employee the subminimum training wage set forth in
36 subdivision (1) of this subsection for an additional period not to exceed ninety days.

37 (3) When the federal subminimum training wage as prescribed by 29 U.S.C. §206 (g) (1) is
38 equal to or greater than the wage rate prescribed in subdivision (1) of this subsection, every
39 employer shall pay to each of his or her employees wages at a rate of not less than the federal
40 subminimum training wage as prescribed by 29 U.S.C. §206 (g) (1). The subminimum training
41 wage rates required under this subsection shall be thereafter adjusted in accordance with
42 adjustments made in the federal subminimum training wage rate. The adoption of the federal
43 subminimum training wage provided by this subsection includes only the federal subminimum
44 training wage rate prescribed in 29 U.S.C. §206 (g) (1) and does not include other wage rates, or
45 conditions, exclusions, or exceptions to the federal subminimum training wage rate. In addition,

46 adoption of the federal subminimum training wage rate does not extend or modify the scope or
47 coverage of the subminimum training wage rate required under this subsection.

48 (c) Notwithstanding any provision or definition to the contrary, the wages established
49 pursuant to this section are applicable to all individuals employed by the State of West Virginia, its
50 agencies and departments, regardless if the employee or employer are subject to any federal act
51 relating to minimum wage: *Provided*, That at no time may the minimum wage established pursuant
52 to this section fall below the federal minimum hourly wage as prescribed by 29 U.S.C. §206(a)(1),
53 and at no time may the subminimum training wage established pursuant to this section fall below
54 the federal subminimum training wage rate as prescribed by 29 U.S.C. §206 (g) (1).

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NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to increase the state minimum wage from \$8.25 an hour to \$11.00 an hour effective January 1, 2027.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.